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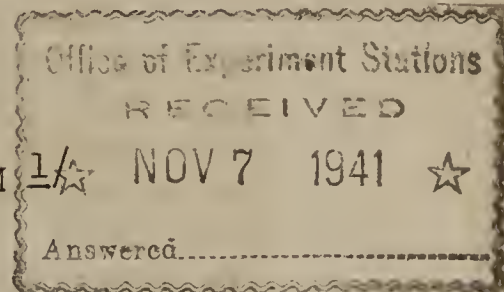
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WHAT IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A FARM GIRL

TO OBTAIN A SUCCESSFUL, HAPPY FAMILY LIFE ON A FARM



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Factors to consider.

1. What are your likes and dislikes?
2. What contributions to your living can you expect from -
 - a. Cash -
 - (1) From the sale of farm products?
 - (2) Earned from outside work?
 - b. Benefits obtained -
 - (1) Direct from the farm?
 - (2) Direct from the family?
 - c. Undeveloped resources of farm and family?
3. What importance would you attach to a husband's attitude toward -
 - a. Farming?
 - b. The home farm?
 - (1) A two-family farm.
 - (2) A one-family farm.
 - (3) A part-time farm.
 - c. Finding another farm to operate?
 - d. Starting as tenant or owner?
4. What are your long-time objectives for a farm home?
 - a. To own a farm home free of debt in your old age.
 - b. To continue ownership in the family.
 - c. To consider it merely a place in which to rear a family.

1/ An outline for discussion of some factors to be considered by young farm women before they become established in a farm home. It has been written primarily for use of State extension workers with farm young people's groups. The text, so organized as to become the back-ground for one or more discussion meetings, is aimed at increasing the ability of farm young people to observe more accurately conditions relating to farm family life in their communities.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

1. What are your likes and dislikes?

What you get out of life depends primarily on discovering traits most dominant in your make-up and upon placing yourself in a position that will give those traits the greatest opportunity to develop. Persons with unusual musical talents can profit greatly by taking music lessons, but no amount of instruction will make a musician out of a person who is tone deaf. There are some to whom the hum of a typewriter or footsteps of the crowd are also music. You should study yourself to find out what it is within you that gives you the greatest happiness. Your likes and dislikes may be as important to your future happiness as your opportunities.

Many farm young women have a natural liking for work with poultry, seeing the garden grow, initiating their own activities, gathering home-grown vegetables or flowers, reaping the results of what they have sown. They want to be part of a business that is fairly permanent and secure and which they can call their own. Such people usually like to work out of doors, to be where there are birds, trees, and other growing things, and where they can look across the valley to the wooded hills beyond; to enjoy a certain type of family life where the business of earning and living are intimately related, and where there is a place for children to play and to learn to do things as they grow. A farm home provides a congenial environment for such young women. It develops their inherited capacities and tends to give them the satisfactions they crave.

However, many other young women born and reared on the farm do not possess such talents or capacities. Another environment would probably be more pleasing and satisfying to them. If a young woman likes to work with the typewriter, at a telephone switchboard, or in a store, to be a part of a crowd and among tall buildings, to have easy access to libraries, "movies," or be a member of a large church organization, she might get more satisfactions out of life in a city or small town than on a farm.

Her choice of whether to stay in a farming community or go into an industrial center has a bearing on the question of whom she will probably meet and marry. Most young women who remain at home on farms ultimately marry farmers. Those who do not marry generally migrate to urban centers. Therefore, if the young woman's interests are not in farming, and she stays in spite of them, she is confronted with the problem of whether she is willing to adjust those interests in such a way that farming, as a way of living, will not be too annoying.

For example, if she cannot endure having newborn lambs warmed under the kitchen stove, dislikes to handle a setting hen, or objects to her part in keeping milk utensils clean, it is doubtful if she will be happy in a farm home. In most cases she must have sufficient interest in the farm business to understand how the income is obtained and for what purpose it would best be spent. If she marries a farmer, she plays a large part in his success or failure.

The wife's interest in the farm business is vital to a farmer's success in obtaining a satisfactory income entirely from farming. This cooperative attitude will have to be a part of all their activities if as a family they are to get the most satisfaction out of life. In the two studies referred to in table 1, the operator's return was doubled. Evidences of the wife's cooperation were how much she helped to make the farm plans and adjust the farm and home budget, and whether she took an active, constructive interest in the farm program of her husband.

Table 1.--Result of study of operator's return: Men having the most and men having the least cooperation from their wives

Group	:	Minnesota -	:	Indiana
	:	operator's	:	operator's
	:	labor	:	labor
	:	earnings	:	income
Men with most cooperation.....	:	\$ 1,757	:	\$ 781
Men with least cooperation.....	:	842	:	380

The farm homemaker not only must be interested in the farm business but must be able to get the utmost satisfaction out of the materials and situations a farm provides. The food products from the farm must be processed and served properly if the family is to get maximum health and vigor from their use. If the home is to provide the maximum happiness to the farm family, some ingenuity will have to be exercised as to use and arrangement in the farmhouse. The farm homemaker will have to exercise her creative ability not only regarding the material things the farm provides, but also the many human satisfactions that naturally arise. A farm family should be able to supplement its satisfactions by appreciation of the trees, the clouds, the sunsets.

Discussion suggestion.--Pick out at least two farm families in your community - one where, in your opinion, a satisfactory type of family life exists, the other where you feel that family life is unsatisfactory. List the causes for the difference.

2. What contributions to your living can you expect from -

The person living on a farm has to approach the consideration of the use of these resources in a way entirely different from the way of the person living in a town or city and dependent upon a wage or salary.

In looking forward to making a home on a farm, three sources of satisfaction have to be considered: (a) Cash available for living; (b) the direct contribution of the farm and the farm family to living; (c) the undeveloped creative capacities of the family members. What contributions would you expect a farm to make to your living from

(a) Cash -

(1) From sale of farm products?

The cash income desired for family living should be considered as the first overhead cash expense and be given primary consideration in planning what farm ultimately to locate on and what type of farming business to conduct. If a farm family's cash expense should amount to \$500 and the average milk cow should return only \$25 a head above the out-of-pocket cash expense, the farmer would require 20 cows to provide this cash for the farm family. Or, if they laying hens returned only \$1 a head above the out-of-pocket cash expense, the flock would have to consist of 500 laying hens to provide the family with a \$500 income for living.

(2) Earned from outside work?

In many cases, part or all of this cash for living expenses is obtained not from the sale of farm products but from employment away from the farm. Again, consideration will have to be given to what the farm will furnish direct and how much cash should be earned to obtain the kind of living desired.

(b) Benefits obtained -

(1) Direct from the farm?

Through a direct contribution, most farms can furnish the family with a large share of the food consumed, and in many instances with all the fuel. A house to live in is found on nearly every farm. If a value were assigned to these contributions, in many cases it would exceed the amount of the net cash receipts. One is sure of what is produced and consumed on the farm, but what is sold may not always return a profit and thereby contribute anything to family living. The satisfactions received, from whatever the size of the net farm income, can be increased not only by producing the maximum on the farm but also by developing ability to appreciate the environment of the farm on which the family chose to locate.

(2) Direct from the family?

Whether the food materials be raised or purchased, the ultimate satisfactions the family may enjoy will depend largely on the ability of the housewife to prepare them for ultimate consumption and in a way that is most pleasing to the family. The arrangement of home furnishings and equipment may detract or increase the happiness of the family experiences. Also, a farm woman's ability to stimulate an active interest in the trees, the streams, and the sunsets enables the farm family to realize the added satisfactions a farm can contribute to good family life.

(c) Undeveloped resources of farm and family?

Probably the largest unused resources in a farm family set-up are the undeveloped creative capacities of individual members of the family group that might contribute either to the person's own satisfactions or to the satisfactions of the other members. By learning what foods would add most to the health, vigor, and growth of the family, by raising these foods on the farm, by knowing how to prepare them so that they taste good, much more satisfaction might be derived from the food produced or consumed direct. Active cooperation in some of the common family objectives relating to food, clothing, or shelter may contribute greatly to the satisfactions coming from within the family group. A little praise may make a meal a delight, a rose may add charm to a dress, a bouquet may make a dining table a thing of beauty.

These undeveloped capacities may contribute not only to material things but also bring the joys that come from happy human relationship in an environment that arouses appreciation of the beautiful.

Discussion suggestions.--List the satisfactions you want out of life. In the two families you selected, determine what are the primary source of satisfactions or dissatisfactions.

3. What importance would you attach to a husband's attitude toward -

a. Farming?

The attitude of a man and his wife toward farming plays a greater part in the success or failure of their farming operation and in the satisfaction they get from life than does the attitude of a man and his wife toward any other occupation.

Occupational congeniality is an important factor to consider in the choice of a farmer as a life partner, but other factors that contribute to a family's success and happiness are just as significant to the farm family as to any other. Husbands and wives must enjoy each other and want similar things from life. A young man, to succeed in farming, must have had farm experience, like to work with animals and to see crops grow. He must be able to manage himself so that he will perform the right farm job at the right time. Those who lack this ability usually fail.

Also, a young man may plan to farm because he will inherit a farm. The chances are that if he attempts to operate it, not because he likes to farm but because he may inherit it, he will fail. Fortunate is the young man who likes to farm and inherits a good farm. (Table 2.)

Table 2.--Reasons given by two States for starting farming
and returns from earnings

	:	Minnesota:	:	Indiana:
	:	Labor earnings	:	Labor income
Personal preference	:	\$ 1,332	:	\$ 709
Only training	:	1,074	:	339
Inherited farm property	:	795	:	508

If the young woman wants to live on a farm, all the aforementioned human factors should be given consideration. Occupational congeniality is a far greater contribution to happiness in life on the farm than it is in most other occupations.

b. The home farm?

From the point of view of a young married couple, farms may be divided into three important classes:

(1) A two-family farm.

There are farms where the income is large enough to support two families and where living arrangements satisfactory to both families could be set up. A wage or partnership agreement between a young man and his bride would enable them to have a good chance for success and happiness in their farming enterprise.

(2) A one-family farm.

There are other farms where a son can remain on his home farm and receive a fair wage, but if he brings a bride home, both financial and living arrangements will require major adjustments. Here the chances for success and happiness are small.

(3) A part-time farm.

In the third group of farms there are insufficient farm resources to provide a decent living, therefore the operator either must supplement his farm returns by money earned off the farm if he is to attain this living, or accept a lower standard. Of course, a young man from such a farm would have to support his bride entirely by money earned away from the farm.

The home farm of a potential life partner should be looked at from these points of view before it is accepted as a possible home.

Discussion suggestions.--List the farms in your community and determine which ones fall into these three classes.

c. Finding another farm to operate?

After previous depressions, many young men moved to the West and took up land that was turned to new agricultural uses. At present there is a tendency to reduce the acreage of land cropped. This lessens the opportunity for young people to settle upon new land or bring additional acres into cultivation on farms where they now live.

If our population estimates for the future are correct, sufficient cropland is now under cultivation to take care of our agricultural needs as a nation. There is very little reason for increasing either the number of farms or the cultivated acreage.

Therefore, the problem of a young man who is looking about for a farm to operate other than the home farm, is to find one that has provided a satisfactory living in the past and has possibilities of providing such a living in the future. Many farms cannot meet these requirements.

d. Starting as a tenant or owner?

At present an increasing number of young men who become farm operators start as partners with their parents or as share tenants, and also start at an older age. This situation is due principally to inability to accumulate sufficient capital to become either cash tenants or independent operators. Accumulating sufficient capital to start farming on one's own account is an important factor in determining the rapidity of the young man's advancement up the agricultural ladder.

4. What are your long-time objectives for a farm home?

Most farm people want sufficient food of the right kind to make them vigorous and healthy, and clothes that not only protect them against the elements but also are becoming and make them feel comfortable in the group of which they are a part. They want a house that will withstand the weather, one that is convenient to work in and that contributes to good family life. Most farm people want children and to train and educate them to meet their life problems successfully. They want to look forward to security in old age and to living in surroundings that do not violate their standards of the artistic. Many other suggestions may be added to those given here. Every farm girl has her own "want pattern."

Discussion suggestions.--Write down your "want pattern." Which of the three points of view mentioned below does it most nearly fit? Determine the number of farms in your community in each of the three classes. In that pattern not only the present but also the future must be considered. From the point of view of a farm family the future may be the controlling factor in deciding many family questions.

A farm may be looked upon from many different points of view, among which are a. To own a farm home free of debt in old age. b. To continue ownership in the family. c. To consider it merely a place in which to rear a family.

To arrive at any objective requires sacrifices. These sacrifices are personal choices. We do one thing rather than another because that thing fits into what we want out of life. We may give up the keeping of an extra cow in order to raise pork and poultry for home consumption. Land for crops and time that might be used for fishing may be sacrificed in order to have a garden. The wishes and feelings of others may become more important than one's own feelings. If the long-time goal is to own a certain farm free of debt, certain sacrifices will have to be made to reach this objective. If children's training and education is the goal, some other things may have to be sacrificed to achieve it.

a. To own a farm free of debt in old age.

To retain title to a farm requires long-time planning, not only for the use of the land but for the use of the farm income. Success with this goal requires as much planning on how to use the money earned as on how to earn it. Even though the cash receipts from the farm may be fairly large, if they are not used in such a way as to increase the efficiency of the farm operations and to keep the outgo of cash within the income, sooner or later title to the land is liable to be lost. Frequently certain living requirements are accepted as a matter of course and their cost becomes a first overhead fixed charge against the receipts. If they cannot be kept within the amount of cash available, some of the capital has to be used to maintain them. Therefore, this so-called standard of living is an important factor to consider in determining what the income and outgo are likely to be for an individual farm in a certain area.

How much to sacrifice of family living, of education, or of health in order to own a farm free of debt is a problem many farm families have to face.

The farm-family budgets referred to in table 3 are actual typical farm budgets for a good farming area. The farm business was big enough to sustain a father-son partnership and make continuity of family ownership possible.

b. To continue ownership in the family.

If your long-time objective is to own a farm with sufficient natural resources not only to maintain parents fairly comfortably but to permit son and wife also to have a comfortable living from it, more extensive acres of cropland, certain sacrifices, and different choices as to what is most important may be required. It may be necessary to have two houses, a different system of farm enterprises, or the son assume managerial responsibilities at an earlier age.

Table 3.--Evolution of a budget on a two-family farm

Item	Boy 18 years old		Newly Married		Married 15 to 20 years		Married 35 years	
	Typical	Your	Typical	Your	Typical	Your	Typical	Your
Budget.....								
Food.....	\$-----		\$ 200		\$ 370		\$ 200	
Clothing.....	\$ 100		200		360		200	
Education.....	10		25		145		50	
Health.....	8		25		50		50	
Religion.....	10		50		60		50	
Recreation.....	50		50		55		75	
Fuel and light.....	-----		50		210		100	
Furniture and equipment.....	-----		100		220		50	
Personal.....	22		50		65		50	
Automobile.....	100		(105)		(250)		(200)	
Total.....	\$ 300		\$ 750		\$1,535		\$ 825	
Owned capital....	\$ 100		\$1,500		\$8,000		\$16,000	
Borrowed.....	-----		1,500		8,000		0	
Annual savings...	200		500		500		0	
Interest.....	0		800		480		0	

c. To consider it merely a place in which to rear a family.

Many families with an outside source of income live on farms only because the parents consider the influence of farm life on the children more beneficial than life under other conditions. A farm properly organized can provide many of the foods that make up an adequate diet. The many farm tasks enable the children to develop habits of assuming responsibilities and that make for accomplishment. These children work in competition with nature's laws and must learn to know them and use them to their benefit. They can work and play in the open air and sunshine. Generally, the housing situation is such that there are plenty of sleeping quarters and the home is a place in which to entertain friends. In some instances, the ownership of the farm has been sacrificed in order that the parent's ambitions for their children may be realized.

NOTE:--After you have thought over the points raised in this outline you may want to make up a check list of points a young woman should consider before deciding to make a home on a farm. If you should make such a list, the author would be pleased to receive a copy.

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DISTRIBUTION.--A copy of this circular has been sent to each State extension director, State and assistant State leader and county agent in 4-H Club work; extension editor; agricultural-college and experiment-station library.

